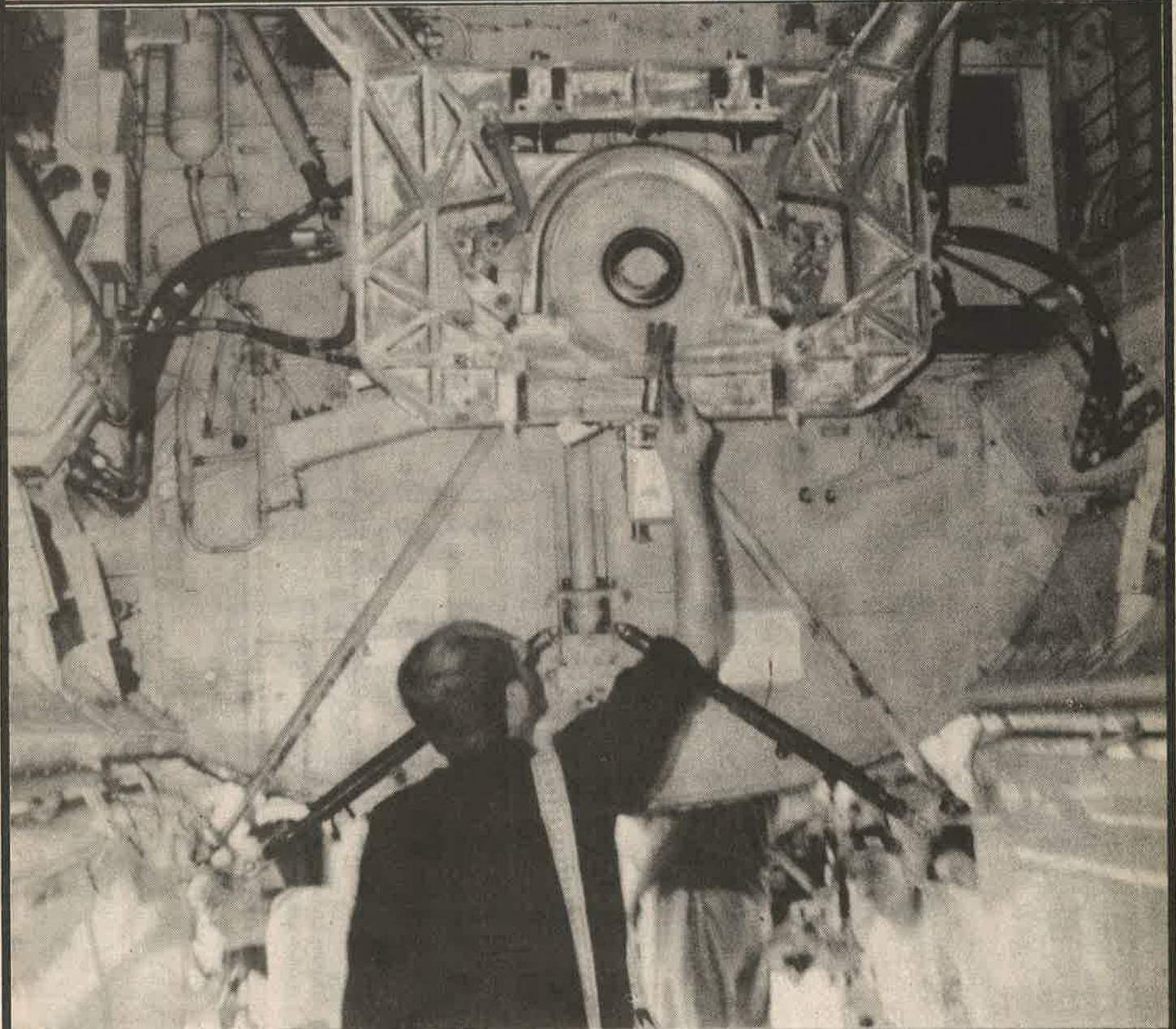


via pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Volume 22, Number 2

Summer 98



As part of the Gods of Metal Plowshares, Rev. Larry Morlan hammers inside the bomb-bay of a B-52.

Features Inside: Catholic Worker Needs a Roof!! / Special Insert: Gods of Metal Plowshares

When It Rains . . .

by Matt McGarry

Well, here I am again. I bet most of you thought I wasn't going to make it back. Actually, I imagine that most of our readers don't have the slightest idea of who I am. That's alright, I have been gone for awhile and was only here for a few months to begin with. I lived and worked at the Des Moines Catholic Worker from May to August last summer through a program

wisely sponsored by my university. I had to return to my studies in the fall, but by that point it was too late; I had caught that Catholic Worker fever, and I'm afraid I'll be stuck with it for the rest of my days. Now, after a year of wandering the globe, I'm back for another summer and things are just as I left them. There is still hot food on the stove, smiles on the faces, and the ceiling is still caving in. This last unfortu-

nate circumstance is what prompted me to write this article.

There is a danger, to which I have often succumbed, to overly romanticize what goes on here. The Worker is an incredible place, founded in love, steeped in tradition, filled with community, and geared toward an essential and beautiful mission. At the same time, life can be quite unpleasant. Watching the agony of poverty, drug addiction, domes-

tic abuse, and feeling helpless to do anything about it, all numb the soul and can deaden the will to serve. To do the work here, we ask a lot of ourselves and our fellow community members. We ask for prayers, donations, help around the house, and emotional support. **Right now we are asking for a roof.** The weather has been pretty horrific lately, as any fellow Des Moines resident knows. We've been fortunate enough to avoid the flooding, but our old roof just can't handle the stress of four inches of rain in one day. The ceiling is leaking in several rooms and a substantial section of ceiling collapsed in the big room upstairs. It is difficult to put a roof over the heads of the homeless when the roof is full of holes.

This must seem like yet another of the seemingly endless Catholic Worker appeals. Many of you already give generously of your time and money for which we are incredibly grateful. Besides, a certain degree of discomfort is good for us; it brings us closer to the suffering of our guests and keeps us from becoming too comfortable in our security. **However, there is no avoiding the fact that Dingman House needs a new roof.** If you are able to donate some money regardless of the amount, or your talents as a roofer, wonderful. If not, saying a prayer for this old house is an equally valuable donation. We have faith that our faith and the faith of our readers will lead to a solution. That is the Catholic Worker way, and it seems to have worked pretty well so far.

Peace, Matt



Upcoming Events

Midwest Catholic Worker Gathering
September 18 - 20. See page 7 for details.

Anniversary Event

Peace Activists to Gather for Celebration/Action

You are cordially invited to take part in a gathering on October 17-19 in Omaha marking the 10th anniversary of the Peace Planting actions at the missile silos in Missouri, the 75th anniversary of the War Resisters League (WRL) and the second annual observance of the WRL's "A Day Without the Pentagon."

The Omaha gathering is sponsored by the Lakes and Prairies Life Community. Discussions and entertainment on October 17-18 will be hosted by the Omaha affiliate of LAPLC. On October 19, while WRL activists are conducting a "citizens' inspection" at the Pentagon, activists gathered in Omaha will head for Offutt Air Force Base south of Omaha, headquarters of StratCom, which controls the targeting and launching of all U.S. long-range nuclear missiles.

Organizers hope to see the faces of many friends from the past who worked so hard to rid the Midwest of nuclear weapons.

For more information contact: Nukewatch, PO Box 649, Luck, WI 54853, (715) 472-4185

Please join us for
Friday Evening Liturgy
7:30 p.m.

Dingman House, 1310 - 7th St.

Celebrate the Eucharist and spend time with friends.

Cordaro / Morlan Speaking Tour

Awaiting trial for their recent Plowshares action, Fathers Frank Cordaro and Larry Morlan will be sharing the good news of disarmament with groups at several Midwest locations this summer. (See special *via pacis* insert for story of the action.)

The following speaking events have already been scheduled:

- Aug. 8 & 9** Weekend Masses at St. Ambrose Cathedral, Des Moines
- Aug. 9** 6:00 p.m. St. Catherine Siena/ Drake Newman Des Moines. Contact: DM Catholic Worker (515) 243-0765 or Helen Oster (515) 223-0531
- Aug. 15 & 16** Weekend Masses at Immaculate Conception in Omaha (Larry) and St. Anne's, Logan, IA; Holy Family, Mondamin, IA (Frank)
- Aug. 16** 7:00 p.m. Immaculate Conception Church Omaha. Contact: Jo Peterson (402) 556-9057
- Aug. 22 & 23** Dubuque, IA. Place to be announced. Contact: Mary & Rick, Dubuque CW (319) 582-9079

** Other sites yet to be arranged; for information contact: The Des Moines Catholic Worker, (515) 243-0765.

Community NEWS

by Carla Dawson-Ngamo

Hello! I hope this article finds everyone in the summer spirit. Yet again I've put off writing my article until the last minute. I'm a real procrastinator. I hear there is a pill for procrastination now! Maybe later I'll look into it.

Well, to get on to community news: We've been really busy and blessed so far this spring/summer, and there's much more to come.

We were visited by the three traveling "Catholic Worker Women." Jen, Molly and Kristin were six much needed hands. They were willing to do anything asked of them — from cleaning the basement to going on school field trips. They reminded me of what it's like to look at the Worker with new eyes. I hope they all find their calling in whatever they choose to do. (See article by Jen in this issue of *vp*.)

Boz, from the Netherlands, has been with us a month. He has really pitched in to return the downstairs library at Ligutti House to its grand state. He is a very special man with great wisdom. Boz will be with us through July and then heads to the Denver CW. His quiet presence will be greatly missed. Take good

care and keep us in your heart.

Matt McGarry, our 1997 summer intern from Notre Dame, is back with us! However, this summer he is not doing a project through Notre Dame. He just couldn't stay away. Hard to believe he was gone a whole year.

Matt to me is like a breath of fresh air. My three sons love him like a big brother. He is one of, if not the nicest young man, I have ever met. When I look at Matt I have great hope for the world. We are all better for him being here. "If you see fifty thousand dollars on the floor, what you gonna do?"

We will soon have a new Notre Dame student with us. Her name is Teresa, and she'll be here on June 22. We would like all of you to welcome her if you meet her.

We have a refurbished garage thanks to the father and son Swoboda team. They have been working on it, and it looks wonderful. We will be able to use it for much needed storage. And also to give out produce. Thank you for your wonderful gift. Frank Swoboda is working on his Eagle Scout Badge.

Bonnie Sheldon has been a long-term guest at Dingman House. She moved out at the be-

ginning of June. Bonnie is one of the hardest working women I know. She makes me realize how many women are out there busting their butts trying to make a living for their families and themselves. Never give up the fight Bonnie. You are in our hearts and prayers.

We would like to send graduating wishes to Rob, Arian and Julie, to my niece Cecily and to all the other students who graduated. May you embrace life to the fullest. Our prayers go out to you. Your life is what you make it.

Now that I'm done with all our friends, I'll move on to our community. Michael is taking a much needed vacation to visit family, most of whom he has not seen in many years. We hope his trip will clear up some past issues and help him in his future journey.

Eddie is also going on a short trip to visit a friend in Missouri. Ed has been busy as always helping out at Home Recycling, working on Ligutti and doing house duty. Eddie is as always our anchor through the storm.

Norman is still working at Principal. He has our yards and the neighbors' yards looking like we have a lawn service coming.

Meredith has been busy at Java Joe's what with the Farmers Market on Saturday and working at the coffee carts at Methodist Hospital. She is also the director of Criminal Justice Ministries. Right now, she's putting out CJM's newsletter and has



been using every spare moment trying to get it to the printer.

Meredith and my oldest son, Julius, are going on a road trip to New York. They'll be going on July 1. While there, Julius will attend a basketball camp run by Meredith's family. He will also be staying at the NYC Worker visiting Joann Kennedy. I know they will have a wonderful experience.

Julius will be a freshman at East High School in the fall. He left Goodrell Middle School none the worse for wear. His grades were the best ever. He is a shining example of the gifts of living in community — a very caring teenager. What with all the bad press teens have been receiving lately, he is a hope for our future generation. Keep up the good work (Na Na). We're all proud of your accomplishments.

Joshua just celebrated his ninth birthday. His whole life has been spent at the DMCW. He is going into the fourth grade in July and has been taking a Gifted and Tal-

ented art class in the morning at North High School. He loves it. Josh just got a new bike and has been tearing up the sidewalks. He will attend Catholic Youth Camp at the beginning of July. He can't wait.

Jordan has been my cleaning companion in the mornings. He is very good with a vacuum and dust rag. He is going into second grade. His teacher, Mrs. Floerchinger, said it was a joy and a trial to have been Jordan's teacher for two years. I would like to send her all our love. She has been one of the best influences on both Josh and Jordan. Teacher of the Decade!

I have been busy trying to juggle being a wife, mother, and Catholic Worker. At times, it seems difficult and other times seems doable. I am as always thankful to all of the wonderful people who have made my life at the Worker a testament to what God can do for people.

I will leave you now with a blessing and wishes for a safe and joyful summer.

Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

I'm at loss for words; I'm finding myself in the midst of a great forest of words and thoughts that criss-cross each other, somewhat like foot trails on a mountain. I'm looking for something to say. But I want to say it right or close to being right, and hope it is clear to you.

I want to say things that are simple, so that simple people like myself can understand along with those who spent years in college. I've learned that a person whom you or I might call dumb, retarded, stupid or "no brainer" has some smarts. All we've got to do is slow down and listen, as much as you want others to listen to you. We often listen to music better than we listen to each other. I've noticed

that we often try to raise our voices louder than others just to be noticed, to show others that we want to be bigger, have more stuff, money or power, or just to see how loud we can go.

But like I said, I'm at a loss for words that I can mix with my feelings, that mean something like the music we listen to, like something given, like something said out of love from the heart — out of Truth from the heart, like giving a hug to anyone, a stranger, a friend, a relative, a pet, tree or even a plant.

Still lost, although I just cut my foot. The Truth is Two Toes Boy almost a Teaspoon. I'm hoping that there's no infection.

It is interesting: We are all different colors, sizes, shapes, ages, hair colors, eye colors, foot sizes

— even our noses are different. But the color of our blood. Red, it's red. I haven't met a person yet whose blood wasn't red. And if blood could talk, it would say something like we're all the same. It's what's inside that matters, not just the outside.

I'm still lost, but I think I found something for my foot. We have two feet, two arms with hands along with two ears, two eyes, ten fingers to keep them company on each of the two hands, a nose, a mouth with a tongue to keep the lip of the mouth company, a lonely brain in the head which keeps company with the heart which is found in the heart of the body. We are born into this world, this life naked.

Imagine, if you can, the thought that clothing was never created by man or woman. I wasn't around when clothes were created. We would all be naked meaning there would be no way of knowing who was rich or poor, smart or dumb, warmer or cold, military or civilian. I guess all we would know would be our sex, short, tall, shape, looks. Anything else — we would have to talk to each other.

Why must the present be punished for what was done by others in the past.

I am guilty today for all the wrong that I have done myself. No one else should bear the punishment of my own actions. We shouldn't pass on our hates, wars, mistakes, problems and whatever trash, to our children to their children and so on.

Ever since I found out that I had diabetes, I don't just think about my body and what's happening to it, both by me and the diabetes. I'm also thinking about the earth, our world, our home, our life and what life may be left.

I believe that we're not ready to live together in a high-tech space ship in outer space or in a biosphere city, not with all the hate, anger, greed, willingness to kill for whatever reason, righteousness without understanding of fairness. We're not ready.

Yet I also believe that because we pollute the environment, causing changes in weather patterns, and dangerous floods, because now many other countries are building weapons of massive destruction, not only nuclear, but also biological weapons, with all that and more, I believe we may be forced to live in an enclosed environment in order to survive. Then we'll have to change.

I've changed my eating habits. I have to check myself at times I watch every part of my body for cuts, scratches and any changes or marks mostly around my feet. I take more baths: sponge baths that is.

I believe that if we are forced to live in an enclosed environment and we haven't changed to caring for one another, then there is no hope. We must give up a lot of things ourselves if we are to serve, to share, to forgive, to love, to listen, to be fair and strong and more.

Looking at my messy room, I can say that I would have to

change things about me like habits, mixed feelings and how I shy away from people, among other things.

I believe Jesus Christ, St. Francis, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Henry David Thoreau, and others who lived with less had much to give. To me, they and others like them would be good examples for living in the future.

I have a habit; I'm still a beginner in wood carving. I also build model trucks, cars and planes. Whenever I get something done to the point where I'm happy with it, I give it away. Wow. For nothing, free. There are things that I don't give away and may never, but I share with others.

Well, I guess I did have something to say. My foot feels okay right now.

As always, I thank you for your time. But before I go, I have a suggestion for those who love music: Listen to John Lennon's song, Imagine. It may help you to understand what I'm saying. With thoughts and prayers for you, our home and life. I thank you. Norman.

Announcement

The library at Ligutti House has been renovated, restocked, and is available for use by the public. Many titles relating to faith, peace and justice can be found there. Call 243-0765 for more info.

via pacis
Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community
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Gods of Metal Plowshares

Do not turn to idols and do not cast metal gods for yourself. I am Adonai your God. (Leviticus 19:4)



Ardeth Platte, OP; Kathy Shields Boylan; Rev. Larry Morlan; Carol Gilbert, OP; Rev. Frank Cordaro

Activists Disarm B-52 in Plowshares Action

"The Unmasking"

by Rev. Larry Morlan

It was the Lord's Day, 17 May 1998. It was the second and final day of the Andrews Air Force Base Air Show and Open House, billed as the largest such affair in the nation. It was shortly after 9:15 a.m.

It was at the site of the B-52 Bomber on display that day at Andrews. It was a bomber which, according to the soldier acting as guide, had been busy since being built in 1960; busy in Vietnam and other near-east countries. Busy in Iraq, in the massacre there at the start of this decade, and in the ongoing terrorizing of that land.

The bomb bay doors were open, and children and adults bent down to walk into the guts of this enormous, dark machine. Once in the bomb bay, one looks around the cold, empty space where a large number of nuclear and/or "conventional" bombs are held at the ready for their business. From this space the bombs are spun and then dropped on their victims below.

It was five of us who gathered in this malignant womb. Five Catholic Christians. Among us: a mother/grandmother, two Dominican sisters, two parish priests.

We carried household hammers, bottles containing our blood, typed statements declaring our purpose. We carried these and we carried, in our hearts and minds, the vision of Jesus: the unity and peace of the Reign of God.

It was about 9:30 a.m. It was the Lord's Day. Rev. Frank Cordaro, seeing the bomb



Pictured here and below: Children are encouraged to play with many of the weapons on display at the air show.

bay was, for the moment, not crowded, announced the task at hand: "Sisters and brothers! Let us disarm these gods of metal!"

Whereupon we took out our hammers and our blood and began the work of disarmament. It was the Lord's Day.

It was the 30th anniversary of the witness of the Catonsville 9 that day. So each of the five hammered six times apiece. Thirty hammer blows for 30 years. Thirty years of ongoing resistance to the war-making which is business as usual. We rejoiced to celebrate in this way the resistance of that watershed witness at Catonsville. Thank God for that fracture of good order, when good order is death as social method.

The hammer blows rang out, metal on metal, heaven against hell.

The blood was poured, a shocking unmasking was accomplished. To wit: the Andrews Air Show, like all military air shows, depends on true purposes remaining hidden. No mention or display here of tangled bodies, mangled limbs, destroyed lives, ruined towns, daily terror. No blood. All this is under wraps. Wraps of awe at sheer power, wraps of delight at high tech wizardry, wraps of pride at the mustering of human ingenuity and resources and the subsequent concoction of sophisticated machines such as these.

So children are put in cockpits, are handed various weapons. Continued on next page.

Baptism

(for FC)

So when it comes
it comes
like this

The waters that rush
over you drown you
and you fear it as it
comes

But in the blessing
of Christ
(who calls you into
these waters)
you die and (and)
rise

in these waters
Renewed in a renewal
which never ends.

You are a child of God.

— Rev. Larry Morlan



Biographies

Ardeth Platte, OP, a Dominican sister living in community at Baltimore's Jonah House, is originally from Grand Rapids, Mich. A former high school teacher, administrator and City Councilwoman, she has engaged in previous Plowshares actions.

Kathy Shields Boylan, a grandmother, is a mother of five children. She is a member of the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker in Washington, D.C. and has been involved in previous Plowshares actions.

Rev. Larry Morlan is a Roman Catholic priest in the diocese of Peoria, Ill. He is a former member of the Davenport, Iowa Catholic Worker and a struggling resister. He also has previously been involved in a Plowshares action.

Carol Gilbert, OP, is a Dominican sister, formerly from Grand Rapids, Mich., but currently a member of the Jonah House resistance community. She is a former school teacher, who has been involved in previous Plowshare activities.

Rev. Frank Cordaro is a Roman Catholic priest and pastor at Holy Trinity of southeast Warren County in Iowa. As a co-founder of the Catholic Worker house/community in Des Moines, Iowa in 1976, he has been an active worker for justice and peace for more than twenty years.

Chronology

May 17, 1998

On the 30th anniversary of the Catonsville Nine protest, five peace activists — calling themselves the Gods of Metal Plowshares — hammered and poured blood on a B-52 Bomber during the Department of Defense Open House and Air Show at Andrews Air Force Base, Prince George's County, Maryland. The activists were arrested, barred from the base and jailed.

May 18, 1998

In Greenbelt, Maryland the five activists were brought before U.S. Federal Magistrate Jillyn Schultz who indicated they were facing two federal charges: 1) injury, over \$1,000, to government property, which carries a maximum sentence of ten years and a \$250,000 fine; and 2) injury or attempted injury to property in a federal jurisdiction, with a possible sentence of 5 to 20 years and a \$250,000 fine. Remarkably, the activists were released on personal recognizance. Dave Walsh Little, of Baltimore is serving as the group's attorney advisor.

June 9, 1998

The activists returned to Federal Court; the government dismissed the felony charges, and the five are now facing a single misdemeanor charge of willful injury to government property, less than \$1,000 damage, which carries a possible sentence of one year in jail, a \$100,000 fine and a special assessment fee of \$25. The defendants waived their right to a jury trial. A bench trial is set for September 22.

Festival of Hope

for the Gods of Metal Plowshares



September 21, 1998 — Washington, DC
Everyone is welcome!

For more information contact:
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker (202) 882-9649

Activists Disarm B-52 Continued

Continued from previous page
ons and are taught how to aim and are taught how to pull triggers and press buttons; planes soar and roar and the only results seen are the picnic baskets brought out.

So the blood is poured and the wraps are unwrapped, the mask is off.

Looking at our blood on that hammer of hell, one might hear the cries of the young and the old — our sisters and brothers —

whose number, whose names and stories God alone knows, who died in the work of this weapon, this B-52. Our blood thus became theirs, in a communion our witness expressed, indeed flowed from. Our blood allowed theirs to be remembered, to be seen and to cry out. Thus our witness.

We gathered together outside the bomb bay, whose doors had been marked by our hammers and blood. We unfurled a ban-

ner explaining our presence, and we began reading aloud from our statement of purpose. As hundreds and hundreds of folks were in line to tour Air Force One, and as this line snaked around the B-52 bomber, the number of those who saw and heard our witness was great.

In a matter of seconds military police ordered us to kneel and then lay face down on the tarmac. We continued reading from the statement until the papers were torn from our hands. Then we prayed the Lord's prayer. It was the Lord's day.

Two radio journalists from "Ocean Pacifica" in New York City were covering the event at Andrews. When they saw what we had done, they began interviewing us on the scene. The furious cops arrested them as well as us. We were cuffed and taken away, and the journalists too. Together we were taken to military police headquarters.

Mere moments before we had begun our work of disarmament, three young boys, holding hands, entered the bomb bay. With wondering eyes they watched our work, following us outside and staying with us until we were led away. One couldn't but thank God for such witnesses, who provide much of the rationale for our action. One couldn't but thank God they encountered a clear 'no' to weapons of mass destruction amidst so many 'yesses.' It was the Lord's Day.

At police headquarters we were separated, some put in cells, some in rooms with guards posted nearby. We were held strictly incommunicado. We were not offered food, and only grudgingly offered water or allowed use of toilets. No one told us anything except that we were barred and banned from Andrews. A few of the five were able to hear the demanding effort of the radio journalists to learn why they were being held, to speak to someone who could explain this, to call lawyers, to protect their tape and film.

Their demands fell largely on deaf ears. Some of their material was destroyed. Tapes were not returned until days later, and they themselves remained held incommunicado for six hours. At this point they have not been charged with any crime.

US Marshals refused to come



Kathy Shields Boylan hammers on the B-52 Bomber while Fr. Frank Cordaro marks with his blood.

fetch us and take us to a local jail due to heavy traffic caused by the air show. The FBI had been called in to see what we had done, so we were put into their benevolent custody.

It was about 6:00 p.m. and it was the first time since we had been brought in that we were together. We were herded into a van and driven to Upper Marlboro court. Men into one cell, women into another. Here we were finally able to call loved ones, alert them of the witness and of our whereabouts, ask that a lawyer be contacted. We were given sandwiches and initial charges. Then off to Prince George's County Jail, where we could expect to be hanging out for the near future.

The jailer's maxim: Hurry up and wait. So it is when one is being "processed" into a jail. The spirits of the five were high and strong, with much laughter punctuating the day. And so it went. The women were kept together, and the men too. There was tedium and peace and hilarity. The medical aide who "processed" the men had just come from the women and told, to Frank and Larry's disbelieving laughter, of how she had just given the nuns pregnancy tests! "I don't think that's ever happened to them before," this woman admittedly rather sheepishly, though with chuckles, at Frank and Larry's

laughter. (These two have suggested the possibility of raising funds with a contest of some sort based on guesses as to the results.)

The thin plastic jail mattresses were nirvana-like by the time late, late in the evening when folks ended up where they ended up. It had been a day of gifts, a day of joy. It had been the Lord's Day.

Scene: (Monday morning, 18 May) Calls of "Breakfast! Breakfast!" awaken Frank and Larry. The jailer shuffles over, bleary-eyed, to the former who sits abed, bleary-eyed.

Frank: Larry, look at that clock. What time is it?

Larry: 6:30 a.m. It's early, isn't it?

Frank: Larry, look again. Is it 6:30 or 3:15?

Larry: O my God. That's why I feel like I do. (Breakfast is served.)

At 5:00 a.m. or so the men were moved to a holding cell to await transportation to court. The women were moved a bit later. It was nearly 8:30 a.m. when a contingent of FBI folks arrived to move us along to the next thing.

This included a stop at FBI offices in Calverton, MD where we were "processed" again, refused cooperation with the

Continued on next page.



Gods of Metal Plowshares Statement

Do not turn to idols and do not cast metal gods for yourself. I am Adonai your God. (Leviticus 19:4)

You shall not have other gods besides Me. You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them. (Exodus 20:3-4)

... they will hammer their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift sword against nation, no longer will they learn how to make war. (Isaiah 2:4)

Our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order

We could not so help us God, do otherwise.

For we are sick at heart, our hearts give us no rest

(Opening words of the Statement of The Catonsville Nine)

The 20th Century is the Bloodiest Century the World Has Ever Known

How to break the cycles of violence generally held up as the only possible alternatives?

We ordinary people — grandmother, parish priests, Catholic sisters — we, people of faith, have come to Andrews Air Force Base, MD to the annual Air Show and Open House '98:

to unmask the idolatry of these gods of metal, celebrated in this nuclear liturgy of the Air Show. We publicly and openly offer disarmament, in a sacred liturgy on behalf of life to nonviolently and lovingly disarm these weapons of mass murder enflashing the imperative of Isaiah, to hammer swords into plowshares. We plead for the cause of peace with justice and the abolition of war.

to celebrate God as True Security rather than accept weapons and violence as restorers or maintainers of peace. We pour out our own blood as a sign of our willingness to lay down our lives rather than take life from another.

to announce that weapons and their carriers in space, air, sea and land are in fact idols — gods of metal. Our trust in them amounts to worship. We must not applaud, celebrate, or worship them for they defile all of creation.

We are grateful to the Catonsville Nine, who thirty years ago today burned draft files to awaken us to the immorality of the Vietnam War. In this witness we continue the legacy and tradition of the Catonsville witness.

In doing so we hope to offer the next generation an example of love in action — the alternative to violence meeting violence, the alternative to the fate of "an eye for an eye making the whole world blind." (Gandhi)

We encourage all people of good will to explore similar opportunities to put love into action until justice is established and peace prevails in all the earth.



Radio journalist Amy Goodman interviews the Gods of Metal plowshares activists moments before their arrest.

Gods of Metal Plowshares

The measure of blood . . . the voice of the hammer

the beating of the hammer
pierced the dead branches of the forest,
of familiar noise and known voices
hunger, hate, fear, ignorance,
frozen humanity —
sparking the abiding hope
and impregnating the eyes of children
a new writing etched in their hearts,
the thirst for justice
conjured up by the drumming of
the Word against metal,
of love pounding out death—
rendering all hallowed,
witnessing the ushering of the dawn of day
that whispers (in your heart, in mine):
"leave, toss your arms that seize air
and weave illusions out of gods of metal.
Walk in the day,
strip away the dress of darkness"
the winds, once silent, carry the incisive voice
setting the human in motion—
the blood of our sisters and brothers, our own, is crying out,
the seal is traced on thresholds mimicking life and death,
the blood afire ignites the once dead branches
in the cities the deaf hear,
the blind touch the light and grow eyes everywhere,
the mute sings the dance of compassion,
the starving, after being found wanting, eat the bread of justice,
the thirsty drink the wine of joy
blessed, the one who gathers one's life (in an instant),
blood pouring upon blood,
flowing in torrents,
drowning the waves of violence,
life nests, high and low, in branches of trees,
carved into pruning knives,
within reach
the blood runs at the pace of the hammer.

June 20, 1998
Juan Carlos Ruiz

An Invitation to Stand in Solidarity with Gods of Metal Plowshares

Although you have heard much about the five people involved in this witness, many others "behind the scenes" also make up this action. We would like to thank all those people and invite you to join in.

Here are some ways you can offer support:

- ▲ Add your name to the list of supporters and receive the Gods of Metal Plowshares Newsletter.
- ▲ Send a gift of money to be used for court and jail support and the newsletter.
- ▲ With ongoing prayer.
- ▲ Attend trial and court proceedings.
- ▲ Set up a speaking event.
- ▲ Send correspondence of support.

Please make checks payable to:
Gods of Metal Plowshares

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Gods of Metal Plowshares
C/O Liz Walters, IHM
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Detroit, MI 48216

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Jonah House (410) 233-6238
Reba, Scott or Art at Dorothy Day CW (202) 882-9649
Liz Walters (313) 961-4263

We Could Not "Not Act"

Note: The following is a letter mailed to Ardeth's and Carol's loved ones following the May 17 disarmament action.

Dear Family and Friends,

War has not ended. Weapons of mass destruction are still capturing the expertise and energy of the finest minds and the most skilled scientists and laborers. The proliferation of these arms causes the proliferation of violences of every kind — injury to Earth, poverty, intervention into and domination of other nation's resources, and the deterioration of our own spirit. Therefore, to paraphrase a Daniel Berrigan quote: "We could not 'not act.'"

The times are too urgent. The idolatry of the false gods of violent force to solve conflicts, overwhelming space, air, sea and land power, new and more dastardly weapons and carriers, along with the intentional divisions of the classes of rich and poor, people of color and white, allies and enemies and installing a global economy to bloat U.S. greed — all of these create the urgency to act.

The 30th anniversary of the strong Cañonsville message delivered by our mentors on May 17, 1968 to stop the Vietnam War and the annual Andrews Air Force Base, MD Air Show on this same day, 1998 (in which hundreds of thousands of chil-

dren, women and men participate in the nuclear liturgy of worship of false gods of destruction and killing) explain the date chosen for this nonviolent disarming action of divine obedience.

We again use the symbols of our own blood (which identifies the effects of war and also portrays the essential element for the livestream) and household hammers (which reflects a tool used to destroy what is evil and build what will respond to basic human needs). Ours is an action of divine obedience or civil resistance as we directly and nonviolently disarm these carriers and weapons of mass destruction which we be-

lieve to be contrary to God's laws and illegal under our own national and international laws.

At the same time that we reject the idolatry of these idols at the air show as instruments of security, we proclaim our unity with Earth, all creatures, all human beings and our Creator.

Please pray for us as we enter into the next steps of resistance to all idols embodied in these systems — not only the

idols of security held in weapon systems, but also the idols of security held on the domestic level in courts, jails, and prisons that keep us all incarcerated in our false worship to which we donate regularly. Thank you for your understanding and your own journey in peacemaking with us in the difficult times that lie ahead. Gratitude from us and from each of the Gods of Metal Plowshares.

With love and gratitude,
Ardeth and Carol



The Gods of Metal Plowshares read aloud from their group statement as they're being arrested.

Activists Disarm B-52 Continued

Continued from previous page. interview attempts. After a goodly amount of time had passed in this fashion, we were taken to Greenbelt federal court to be more formally charged and otherwise dealt with.

Before being brought into court, we endured yet one more interview attempt by officials who report to the judge what they've learned. In the midst of these attempts were more sandwiches, which unlike the interview attempts, were quite welcome.

After 1:00 p.m. we were led into the courtroom filled with good friends, a very welcome sight. We were charged with two very similar charges of destruction of government property, both felonies. The sentences combined meant a maximum sentence of 30 years. Then the judge moved to release us on our own recognizance. We had discussed how to handle this eventuality. So when the judge asked us if we would agree to obey all laws of the land, not to go to Andrews or any military base and to show up for court, we each stated that we would prom-

ise only to come to court, but none of the other promises were agreeable to us.

Remarkably, even shockingly, the judge said that she would scratch out the parts we objected to, and could we agree to that? We could. And so we walked, as they say.

We've spent this unexpected time "out" going to parishes, where we celebrate eucharist and tell the good news of disarmament. We are going to anybody who will hear us with this news. We are planning to translate our witness in trial.

We were arraigned recently on a different charge than those originally given us. This is a single charge of destruction of government property under \$1,000.00 with a \$100,000.00 fine. Trial is set for 22 September in the Greenbelt courthouse. A celebration, a "Festival of Hope," is scheduled for the night before. See box on front page..

The new charge carries a significantly reduced sentence threat — a maximum of one year. Yet none of the five want

the focus to be reduced to what sentence we get or don't get, whether that be great or small. We are witnesses to the criminal nature of these weapons of mass destruction, especially the nuclear weapons upon which our government builds our "security." We are witnesses against the violence we subsequently organize our society around. We are witnesses to the possibility of a different arrangement based on trust put in the God revealed by Jesus. We have acted in obedience to that arrangement, to the way of love enjoined by Jesus. We have acted trusting in the power of nonviolent solutions.

In the prophecy of Isaiah, disarmament is called for "in the days to come" when God's law is made clear. As disciples of Jesus we know that those days have come in the coming of Jesus, who proclaimed God's law, the law of love of friend and foe. So on 17 May we acted in obedience to that law, in imitation of Christ.

It was the Lord's Day.

Equilibrium

For The Gods of Metal Plowshares

Equilibrium is different for me now

Friends have risked it all they took the risk of faith
God hangs on the cross his side sliced by a spear
Friends live on their knees extracting love from fear

Darkness smears our minds with toys and TV friends
Kathy Frank and Ardeth Carol Larry bow
To God who screams in pain a messy helpless man
Normal lives consumed by God's own burning plan

People glaze their minds a shield from such a fire
Oppenheimer's eyes still beg us to be wise
Planes and bombs are TV lies until we face
Both the court and prison freed by present grace

May 17, 1998 Judith Williams 88115-020
(Judith is currently serving a federal prison sentence for nonviolent resistance at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas.)

If I Had a Hammer...

by Fr. Frank Cordaro

The week prior to the Gods of Metal Plowshares action, I spent a couple of days visiting my cousin Lewis Randa in Sherborn, MA. Lewis is director of The Life Experience School & Peace Abbey in Sherborn. The Life Experience School is a very special school for 19 learning disabled children which also engages in peace and justice work as an essential element of the curriculum. On this visit I had come to ask for their special prayers and support for the Gods of Metal Plowshares action. What I got was much more....

One of the most notable activities of the students at the School is the conferring of the Peace Abbey Courage of Conscience Award to individuals and organizations whose commitment to peace has served to bring about life-affirming social change. Recipients of the award include: Mother Teresa, The XIV Dalai Lama, Rosa Parks, Fr. Daniel Berrigan, Helen Caldicott, Muhammad Ali, Mikhail Gorbachev, Maya Angelou, Harry Wu, Dr. Benjamin Spock and many other famous and not-so-famous people who have worked to make the world a better place. Counted among the not-so-famous recipients of the Award is my humble self.

While in Sherborn, I planned to go to the nearest hardware store to procure the hammer I would use in the Plowshares witness.

But when Karl Schlatterbeck, a Peace Abbey staff member

heard that I was in need of a hammer, he insisted that I first look for one in his workshop. There I found just what I was looking for: an ordinary used hammer with a solid wooden handle.

Before my departure I joined the students for morning prayer in the School's formal gathering room. The room is resplendent with peace artifacts and displays promoting global justice.

To my surprise, Lewis brought the hammer to the morning prayer session; they incorporated

into practice the words of the prophet Isaiah, "they shall beat their swords into plowshares." But, more importantly, this disarmament action would take place in the hearts of those who are open to the truth of the witness, beginning with myself.

I asked for their prayers and support. They needed no coaching, each one offered that and more, many promised to write me in jail.

Unbeknownst to me, Karl had bored out a hole down the long

sic food that sustains all life, especially the indigenous peoples of North and South America. Next, Lewis placed in the hollowed handle of the hammer an offering given to the school by a Russian peace organization: Mounted on a small stand was a flattened piece of metal from the first nuclear missile dismantled by the Soviet Union. Using pliers, Lewis broke off a small bit of the disarmed warhead and stuffed it into the hammer.

There was still plenty of room

copy of the Peace Abbey's Monument to Unknown Civilians killed in Wars and stuffed it into the hammer's shaft as well.

Then he brought a large book to the table. It was the National Registry for Conscientious Objection which is signed by over a thousand people of all ages throughout the U.S. who conscientiously object to violence and war. Lewis took scissors and snipped off the corner of the first page and placed it into the hammer's shaft.

Finally, Lewis brought out a small box that contained a piece of the olive branch used at the 1986 gathering in Assisi, Italy. He placed a bit of the branch into the hammer's shaft and it was filled. He placed the rubber cork over the hole, sealing the contents into the hammer. It was ready!

The hammer was placed in the very bowl used during the prayer service in Assisi. Each person prayerfully dipped their fingers into the water, then passed the bowl to the next person. As the bowl passed from person to person, each participant lovingly dried the hands of the person next to them.

At the end of the service, I was handed the hammer and the towel used to dry everyone's hands. I wrapped the towel around the hammer and went on my way.

This was no longer an ordinary hammer; it became a powerful instrument of disarmament. On that I was honored and humbled to use in our Plowshares witness.



Students and staff of The Life Experience School with Frank Cordaro (center) and the disarmament hammer.

a blessing for me and the hammer into the worship service.

Before we started, I explained to the students that I would use the hammer for an act of disarmament on a weapon of mass destruction. It would be an act designed to work on two different levels: With the help of the hammer, I would actually start to disarm the weapon. The damage would be minimal at best, more symbolic than actual, but real nonetheless. The witness would be a modern day way of putting

end of the wooden shaft and plugged it with a rubber cork. Before we started the service, Lewis began to stuff the hammer with a number of peace related items.

First he inserted a copy of the Peace Seeds prayers which the students pray at the end of each day. These are the prayers offered by the 12 major faith traditions at the Day of Prayer for World Peace in Assisi, Italy in 1986. Then Lewis added a kernel of corn, representing the ba-

in the bored out hole, so Lewis went to the glass case where Peace Pilgrim is honored. On display is a pair of Peace Pilgrim's heavily worn tennis shoes. With scissors, Lewis snip off a small piece of Peace Pilgrim's shoe string and stuffed it into the hammer.

Lewis then added a peace crane from Hiroshima, Japan made by a survivor of the 1945 Atomic Bombing and added that to the contents of the hammer. Next he took a reduced photo-

Messages of Support: What Our Friends are Saying

(Note: The following are just some of the messages we've received via fax, snail mail and e-mail from friends around the world. Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to write and offer support.)

We feel moved and heartened by today's action and want to circulate the "truth force" as widely as possible. Sincerely, Kathy Kelly, Voices in the Wilderness

Hi, I just want to send my love and support to the wonderful people who participated in this action. I hope they are all well and in good spirits. Peace, Guin

Carol and Ardeth, We are so proud of the recent stand you took in your "God's of Metal" action. You are in our prayers!! Have written Fr. Roy—we pray for him also! Mary Benson, Brainerd, MN

This action is a wonderful surprise! I will be thinking of all of you. Steve Borla, New Haven, CT

Greetings from Refugio del Rio Grande, Texas! "The Holy Spirit is a Subversive Bird" that also has an incredibly good, long memory! Thank you very much for the news!!

Reading your message, memories of Martin de Porres and Rose of Lima, in the streets of my country, came to me: so that he, a slave, could feed the

poor without the abuse of passers-by, Rose, The Great Rose, the most beautiful flower our continent has ever let bloom, would sing with her guitar, like any "public woman" would, to protect the slave and the hungry poor, her friends. That action was so revolutionary, that many people called Rose, pejoratively, "THAT woman". The great saint's simple words to the reaction of the "good" people of Lima: "WE ARE IN LITURGY". My profound gratitude to you Ardeth, Frank, Kathy, Larry and Carol: I am sure the great Dominicans Rose and Martin were also taking part in that "Good Liturgy" last Sunday morning! Much, much love, Pio Celestino, Harlingen, TX

"Thank you for the strong witness at Andrews Air Force base on the part of so many of us. We stand with you in prayer and in solidarity in these next days and weeks." Cathy Breen, Maryhouse, NY

My love, prayers, and gratitude to all of you. Mary Trotochaud, GA

My love and gratitude to the Gods of Metal Plowshares and their great anniversary celebration. And thanks to the Catonsville 9 for revolutionizing my life. Joe Mulligan, Nicaragua

Dear ones: ... it has really become clear to me what your collective existence means: the fact that ardeth and carol could be

imprisoned, leaving a population at jonah house greatly reduced ... indicates that the government and military really do exist for the purpose of breaking down community, rending people apart. that you all still fight for what you believe in, though it seems harder and harder to attain and the obstacles keep coming at you, continually awes me. Kristen Tobey, DePaul University

Once again I am amazed how you all continue to push the boundaries of how much can really be done by a small group of dedicated people. It really is an inspiration. I'm keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers as ... you go through your court trials. Love, Rob Mapes, DePaul University

Beautiful action....inspiring and re-seeding the tradition of resistance. Susan Lee Solar, Austin TX

Please extend my blessings and gratitude to Ardeth, Carol, Frank, Larry and Kathy for their "Gods of Metal" action. Kathleen Desautels, 8th Day Center, Chicago

Can't get you out of my mind. Much love to all at Jonah and to the Gods Of Metal Plowshares. Mike and Mary Donnelly, Portland, ME

Dear Friends — To get up to a new day, a new week, check e-mail and find the message of the

Gods of Metal Plowshares — That makes this a very special time. Please let me know ... the ways in which we in Portland can be supportive. Peace, Maureen Webster, Portland, ME

Congratulations and gratitude. Our prayers are with you for this timely action. Much love, Anne Montgomery in Hebron

My thoughts, prayers and love are with you and Kathy, Larry and Frank. Thank you for speaking to the truth. Given recent developments in India and Pakistan, your witness was tremendous, if not timely. Peace ... Rick McDowell

Thanks to the gods of metal Plowshares for their action for peace. May they find peace, protection, support and justice in their efforts to bring justice. Let me know how I can help. Love, mike bardoff

Dear Ardeth: I've put the Gods of Metal picture on my website, which is at www.interport.net/~danmk. I've included your statement & press release on a separate webpage. Dan Kinch, New York

Many thanks for the update, our thoughts and prayers are with you and all those who act on the dictates of their conscience. Ron Landsel, Bruderhof, NY

Fr. Larry, I'm one of your former parishioners at St. Pat's. My family and I were very disturbed to hear that you had been arrested, but, for a worthy and just cause. I am a former Marine Vietnam veteran however, upon returning home in 1969 I joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War. I also was the southern Illinois coordinator for Veterans' for McGovern in the 1972 campaign against Nixon. So, we're both on the same page. We will continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers. May God Bless You and Keep You, Ron Graves and family

I've been a member of the P. Myers peace/environmental group for many years and during the 80's we showed the film "Gods of Metal." It was excellent. It's so encouraging that Catholic religious leaders are still reminding the public of our own 20th century golden calf (actually many gold bulls!). Bobbie Heinrich

So good to hear of your witness on the B-52, couldn't think of a better / more deserving weapon system for a plowshares action myself. And you got one from Louisiana Base. ... They are ones that opened the Gulf War. ... I am spreading the word of your witness and saying prayers for you all. Much love, Ciaran O'Reilly, Brisbane, Australia

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Lessons learned from a Catholic Worker Tour"

Three Women and A Queen

by Jen Kipka

Well, the journey has finally come to an end. It happened last Friday in a parking lot in Duluth, about five minutes. How anti-climactic!! After eight intense months of traveling throughout the country, we were all exhausted and ready for a little space of our own. Visiting about thirteen different Catholic Worker houses from the east to the west coast left us all with a lot of processing to do.

Molly, Kristin and I graduated from Kalamazoo College last June. We had been members of the Non-Violent Student Organization at school, where we lived in community, did activism, and had dinner discussions. Needless to say, our graduation left us hungering for more knowledge and experience in the direction of Christian nonviolence. We figured that the best way to find out was to travel the country, dividing our time between Catholic Worker houses and national parks!

So, after saving money all summer, we took off on October 1, 1997 from Port Huron, MI. It turned out to be a much more intense and life-changing experience than any of us imagined!! Each Catholic Worker house is

drastically different, while having a basic sameness to it. In visiting so many different CW's, we learned of very different ways to deal with each issue, worked with different populations, and discovered what was important, not so important, and definitely what not to do(!) in many different situations. From hanging out with neighborhood kids in Hartford to community gardening in Tacoma, we started to understand what the personalism aspect of the Catholic Worker movement is all about.

We learned a little about what it means to be homeless in L.A., or a single mom struggling to finish her degree in D.C.. As a whole, we were exposed to many things that we had never really known that much about while growing up in suburban or rural America.

Attempting to describe it in my journal the other day, I wrote: "This past year has been incredible. I don't feel like I have the verbal capacity to describe what the three of us experienced. The people, the Catholic Workers, the ideas, and especially the deepening friendships between us continue to boggle my mind. It has been an incredibly life-changing experience, probably more so

than I can even realize right now."

Just like every where else we had been, we learned many different things while in Des Moines. We worked on one of the rooms in their house, learning how to drywall, take apart doorknobs, and build shelves, from the ever-patient Jim, who pretended that he didn't care when we wore out his drill bits.

We learned about a different kind of hospitality as well. The house has several guests that live with them, but I think what struck us the most, was the fact that they open their house to the neighborhood five days a week. This, as we discovered, takes an inordinate amount of energy, smiles, and patience, as people wander in, asking for so many different things. Just dealing with the noise and the controlled chaos is enough to leave you feeling pretty worn out! We were very impressed by this, as well as by the talents of the workers to treat everyone with love and respect - something that is very hard to achieve sometimes.

We really enjoyed spending time in Des Moines, and would have spent an entire month there had we not been called home by weariness and a longing for our



own beds!

As for the future, we are all continuing to lead our lives while walking with what we gained this year. Kristin is starting a Catholic Worker house in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. It is in the planning stages now, with lots of fundraising ahead of them, but with the support of a parish.

Molly and I change our minds every time we're asked, so by the time this is written, I'm sure it will be something different! Molly is planning on living in Baltimore until Christmas, and thinking about joining a Catholic Worker community after Christmas.

As for me, I'm struggling to decide between Baltimore, and my hometown of Marquette, MI for the next eighteen months. After that, I would really enjoy finding something to do involving environmental activism.

So, in a sense, the journey has

ended, but in another sense, it's just begun. These past eight months have really jump-started the rest of our lives. We will forever be looking back on our experiences at all the Catholic Workers, and in our van, the Queen, with fond memories, and with a realization that our lives were greatly moved by all the people, places, and things we experienced across the county.

A big thanks and hugs to Hartford, New Haven, Sis. Peter Claver House in Philadelphia, Dorothy Day House in D.C., Jonah House, Viva House in Baltimore, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Sheep Ranch CW Farm, Tacoma, Duluth, and last, but definitely not least, the Des Moines Catholic Worker communities who all helped make it happen!!



Homeless

As one may say,
Or one may think,
But I'm not.
Why?

Because the sky is my ceiling,
The ground is my floor,
And everything that
surrounds me are my walls.

So I have the most
beautiful home in the
whole universe.

And right now your
sitting in my kitchen.

Bi Ji'mi
1995

Plantings

Johnny
Was the seed
For the apple tree

Gandhi
Was the seed
For passive
Resistance

Crazy Horse
Was the seed
For structured
Violent
Opposition

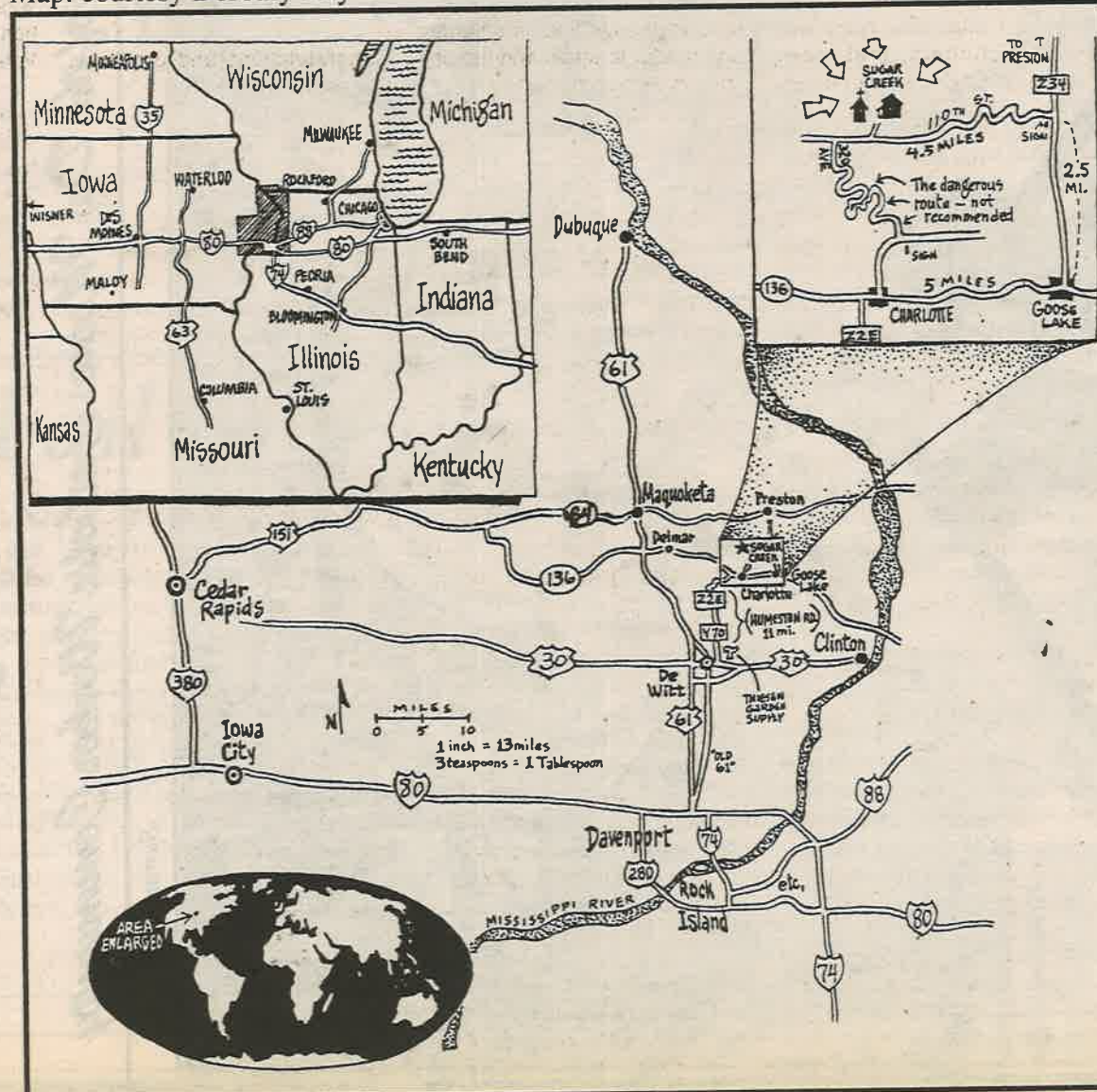
Materialism
Is the seed
For nature's
Destruction

Turtle Highrock



Des Moines Catholic Worker To Host Midwest Catholic Worker Gathering Sugar Creek, Iowa September 18 - 20

Map: courtesy Dorothy Day CW in Rock Island, IL



● In customary fashion we will begin the gathering on Friday night with food and fellowship. The adventure continues on Saturday with times for discussion and recreation. The annual talent show, music, inevitable bonfire, liturgy and clean up are added attractions.

● Of course, everyone is welcome.

Be sure to bring:

- Sleeping Equipment bedding for bunks or for your tent
- Food meals are potluck
- Propaganda copies of your newsletters
- Football Mary if you have her

● **RSVP to:**
Des Moines CW
PO Box 4551
Des Moines IA 50306
(515) 243-0765

via pacis

Des Moines Catholic Worker

P.O. Box 4551, Des Moines, IA 50306

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House Needs



First and foremost, Dingman House is in urgent need of a new roof. (See article on page 1 of this newsletter.) Please make checks out to: Des Moines Catholic Worker. Please mail contributions to: PO Box 4551, Des Moines, IA 50306.

Otherwise, we are also in need of shampoo, lotion, feminine products, diapers and prayers to pass on to those in need. Please call 243-0765 to arrange a time for someone to pick-up or accept your donation. Thanks and God Bless!